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Borough of Dartford



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1949

T. FARTHING,
Medical Officer of Health.



BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

Annual Report for 1949 of the Medical Officer of Health

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
DARTFORD,

TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS,
OF THE BOROUGH OF DARTFORD.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report as Medical Officer of Health for the year 1949.

The Report is arranged in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health.

I should like to express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their cordial support during the year and also to the Staff of the Public Health Department for their co-operation.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,
Medical Officer of Health.

STAFF.

*DR. T. FARTHING, M.B.(Edin.).—Medical Officer of Health (part time).

*T. H. IDDISON, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.—Chief Sanitary Inspector, also Inspector under Shops Acts and Petroleum and Hackney Carriage Inspector.

*R. K. CROW, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.—Additional Sanitary Inspector.

*D. M. SKINNER.—Additional Sanitary Inspector, from 9.5.49.

MISS E. SORRELL.—Chief Clerk.

MISS P. E. BROWN.—Clerk.

* Contribution to salary by Exchequer Grant.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	4,234
Population (Registrar-General's estimated figure Mid-1949) ...	40,580
Population (Census, 1931)	28,928
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1949), according to Rate Books	10,610
Rateable Value	£321,086
Sum represented by 1d. rate	£1,299

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The Borough of Dartford is situate in the lower portion of the Darent Valley, and the rising ground to the East and West of the river. The area of the district is 4,234 statute acres, land and water.

The district is chiefly an industrial one and the area of land available for development is rapidly diminishing. The majority of development which has taken place during the post-war period has been in the Temple Hill area of the Eastern part of the town where good progress is being made with the erection of a municipally owned neighbourhood unit.

There is, in addition to the ordinary population, a large institution population as the following institutions are situate in the district:—

Joyce Green, Orchard and Long Reach Hospitals.
Bexley Hospital.
West Hill Hospital.
St. Vincent's Industrial School.

STAPLE INDUSTRIES.

The principal industries of the district are:—

Engineering.	Manufacture of Drugs and Chemicals.
Paper Making.	Flour Milling.

There are no industries in the district which have a prejudicial effect on health.

OPEN SPACES.

The District is provided with open spaces for pleasure and recreation which include:—

Dartford Heath	340 acres.
Central Park	27 acres.
Hesketh Park	10 acres.

Facilities for outdoor sports are provided at all these open spaces.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR 1949.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Live Births.—Legitimate	322	304	626
Illegitimate	16	14	30
	338	318	656
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of population ... ..	...	...	16.16
Live Birth Rate for England and Wales for the same period	...	...	16.7

Still Births. —Number of still births during the year	13
Rate per 1,000 total births	19.8

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Deaths.	175	194	369
Death Rate per 1,000 of population			9.09
Death Rate for England and Wales for the year			11.7
Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth:—			
From Sepsis			1
Other Causes			4*

* One maternal death is included in this number which occurred in 1948 but which had to await a Coroner's Inquest before registration.

Infantile Mortality.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Legitimate	8	10	18
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	8	10	18

Death Rate of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births ...	27.43
Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales for 1948	32

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various Ages under 1 Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	3-4 weeks	Total under 1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Total Deaths under 1 year.
All causes Certified	12	2	...	...	14	2	2	...	...	18
Uncertified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping-cough ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Enteritis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Congenital malformation	3	1	...	...	4	2	...	...	...	6
Premature Birth	6	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	6
Haemolytic Disease of the New Born	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2
Heart Failure	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Totals	12	2	...	...	14	2	2	...	...	18

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1949.

Causes of Death.										Male.	Female.
1.	Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
2.	Cerebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
3.	Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
4.	Whooping cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
5.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	6
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
8.	Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
9.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
10.	Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
11.	Ac. polio-myel. and polio enceph.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
12.	Ac. inf. enceph.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
13.	Cancer of buc. cav. oesoph and uterus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
14.	Cancer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	7
15.	Cancer of breast	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	5
16.	Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	13
17.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
18.	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	27
19.	Heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51	55
20.	Other diseases of circ. system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	12
21.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	7
22.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	11
23.	Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
24.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
25.	Diarrhoea under 2 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
26.	Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
27.	Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	6
28.	Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	1
29.	Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
30.	Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	4
31.	Premature birth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	2
32.	Congenital mal.; birth inj.; Infant dis.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	6
33.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4
34.	Road traffic accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2
35.	Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
36.	All other causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14	15
										175	194

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL STATISTICS FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, 1945—1949.

	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
Population (Registrar General's estimated figure)	34,280	37,030	38,020	39,930	40,580
Births	581	729	816	722	656
Birth Rate	16.9	19.68	21.45	18.08	16.16
Still-births	18	19	15	14	13
Birth Rate (England & Wales).	16.1	19.1	20.5	17.9	16.7
Deaths	354	369	392	346	369
Death Rate	10.3	9.94	10.31	8.66	9.09
Death Rate (England & Wales)	11.4	11.5	12.0	10.8	11.7
Deaths of infants under 1 year	17	18	28	17	18
Infantile Death Rate	29.08	24.68	34.31	23.54	27.43
Infantile Death Rate (England & Wales).	46	43	41	34	32

LABORATORY WORK.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS.

The work is carried out at the Kent County Council Laboratory, Sessions House, Maidstone.

BYE-LAWS.

The Corporation have Bye-laws relating to the following:—

- Building.
- Common Lodging Houses.
- Dartford Heath.
- Fish Frying.
- Good Rule and Government.
- Houses Let in Lodgings.
- Knackers' Yards.
- Means of Escape from Fire (Factories and Workshops).
- New Streets.
- Nuisances.
- Offensive Trades.
- Pleasure Grounds.
- Prevention of Nuisance from Filth and Rubbish.
- Removal of Offensive Matter.
- Slaughterhouses.
- Tents, Vans and Sheds.

The Bye-laws relating to Knackers Yards made under Section 58 (1) (b) of the Food and Drugs Act were confirmed during the year.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water Supply.

The Borough is supplied with water by the Metropolitan Water Board. The supply is from deep chalk wells and is satisfactory in both quality and quantity. The water is chlorine treated, and has no plumbo-solvent action.

Frequent tests are carried out by the Board and in addition periodical samples are taken by the Sanitary Inspector and submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological examination. With one exception all samples taken during the year were satisfactory. In one sample B.Coli (Presumptive) was found in 30 cc.; a repeat sample was satisfactory.

With the exception of eight houses, all houses in the Borough are supplied from the Board's mains. Of the eight houses not on the Board's mains seven are supplied from deep artesian wells.

Routine samples are also taken of the boreholes supply of a large Institution, all samples taken during the year were satisfactory.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The district is main sewered, and the water carriage system is general. The sewage is dealt with by the West Kent Main Sewerage Board (of which the Dartford Corporation is a constituent Authority) at their works at Long Reach, Dartford. Their system of treatment is satisfactory, and no complaints have been received regarding the outfall works during the year.

There are only 107 houses and 11 factory premises, situated in the more rural areas, which are not connected to the sewers. Over 99% of the houses in the district are connected to the sewers.

Rivers and Streams.

In late December frequent pollution of the River Darent from outside the Council's area was noted. The matter was again referred to the adjoining Rural Authority for investigation.

Closet Accommodation.

The system is a water carriage one. In the portions of the area where main sewers are not available, there are the following houses with conveniences of the type mentioned:—

W.C.'s connected to cesspools	...	...	...	81 and 8 flats
Pail Closets	...	...	...	24

The cleansing of pail closets is not carried out by the Local Authority but by the owners or occupiers of the premises. Cesspools are emptied by the Local Authority upon repayment.

Scavenging.

House refuse is dealt with by controlled tipping at the Corporation's Heath Lane Tip.

Routine treatment of the tip with proprietary dressings containing D.D.T. and Gammexane has been carried out during the year. Apart from occasional complaints regarding flies during the very warm weather, there has been no nuisance.

Public Conveniences and Slipper Baths.

The Corporation have provided and maintain the following, which are under the administrative control of the Chief Sanitary Inspector:—

Public conveniences with wash and brush up facilities and slipper baths for both sexes at Spital Street.

Public Conveniences for both sexes at the Central and Hesketh Parks.

Public Conveniences for both sexes on The Brent.

Public Conveniences for both sexes in Market Street.

The Public Conveniences in Market Street were completed and opened during the year and the old conveniences near the Cattle Market, Lowfield Street, were demolished.

The number of persons using the Slipper Baths is given below, together with comparative figures for 1948:—

					1948	1949
Men	...	...	...	...	13,352	13,929
Boys	...	...	...	...	714	716
Women	...	...	...	...	4,750	4,885
Girls	...	...	...	...	379	399
TOTAL					19,195	19,929

Swimming Bath.

The open-air Swimming Bath in Burnham Road has a continuous heating and chlorination plant; the water being chlorinated so as to give a residual chlorine figure of 0.5 p.p.m.

Samples of the water submitted for examination from time to time throughout the summer were found to be of satisfactory bacteriological quality.

The Swimming Bath at the Dartford College of Physical Education is open during the summer months for certain school children and arrangements were therefore made, during the year, for samples of the water to be submitted for bacteriological examination.

All samples taken were found to be of satisfactory quality.

SCABIES

The treatment of scabies is carried out at the Cleansing Station, King Edward Avenue.

During the year 11 males and 23 females were treated.

The cases were referred to the department by the medical practitioners or by the School Medical Service. As far as possible, the whole of the family are treated when a case is discovered.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.

This is dealt with in the Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspectors which is appended hereto.

HOUSING.

There has been a considerable reduction in the number of new houses erected in the area during the year. Only 81 houses were completed compared with 257 during the previous year, this number is made up as follows:—

By Corporation.

(a) Traditional Type Houses	18
(b) Flats each of 2 units—20	= 40
	<hr/>
	58

By Private Builders.

(a) New Houses	19
(b) Bomb Damaged Houses Re-built	4
	<hr/>
Total New Houses in Year	81
	<hr/>

HOUSING ACT, 1936.

Three premises were represented in accordance with the provisions of Sections 11 and 20 of the above Act. Undertakings were given by the owners that as soon as alternative accommodation was found, the premises would not be used for human habitation.

Comprehensive notices in accordance with Section 9 of the Act were served in respect of two properties, and at the end of the year the repairs to these properties were in progress.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

DISEASE.	Total Cases Notified	Under 1 year	1 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 25	25 and over	Age unknown
Diphtheria ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	97	...	8	42	31	13	2	1	...
Encephalitis Lethargica ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia	10	...	...	...	2	1	1	6	...
Erysipelas	6	...	1	...	...	...	...	5	...
Cerebro Spinal Fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Chicken Pox	64	...	12	9	35	1	5	2	...
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	264	10	84	78	87	4	1	...	...
Whooping Cough	104	10	18	28	44	2	1	1	...
Dysentery ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Poliomyelitis	12	1	1	2	3	3	2	...	...
Polioencephalitis	4	...	...	...	1	1	...	2	...

In addition the following cases were notified from Institutions:—

DISEASE.	Total Cases Notified	Under 1 year	1 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 25	25 and over	Age unknown
Scarlet Fever	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Chicken Pox	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Measles	4	2	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Whooping Cough	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentery	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	...

SMALL POX.

No cases of Small Pox were notified during the year.

A Clinic is held at 7, Market Street for the vaccination of children under 5 years of age. Other children and adults can be vaccinated by their own Medical Practitioners. During the year 370 children under 5 years of age were vaccinated and 23 over 5, 49 children and adults were re-vaccinated.

DIPHTHERIA.

For the second consecutive year no case of Diphtheria was notified.

Contacts with cases notified, and also children referred to the Department by the school teachers, are swabbed with a view to the elimination of carriers.

There has been no alteration in the facilities available for Immunisation against Diphtheria. An Immunisation Clinic is held weekly at the Child Welfare Clinic and, in addition, there is a scheme for immunisation by the medical practitioners in the district.

The following figures (a) give the numbers of children resident in the Borough who were immunised during the year 1949 and (b) total number of children who received reinforcing inoculations during the same year. These, together with other figures available, show that approximately 75% of the children up to the age of 15 years have been immunised:—

				Under 5 years.			5—15 years.
(a)	...	...	...	569	...	...	328
(b)	...	...	...	1,372	...	...	38
				38			1,372

SCARLET FEVER.

The number of Scarlet Fever cases notified (exclusive of institutional cases) was 98, as compared with 46 in 1948.

Of these cases 52 were nursed at home and 46 removed to hospital.

There was one return case during the year.

ENTERIC FEVER.

One case was notified during the year from residents in the Borough.

MEASLES.

There were 262 cases of Measles during the year.

Arrangements are in force whereby if the conditions are unsuitable for home nursing, cases are admitted into the Bow Arrow Hospital.

INFLUENZA.

The incidence of influenza was again of a mild type and calls for no special mention.

FOOD POISONING.

One case of suspected Food Poisoning was notified during the year but was afterwards found not to be Food Poisoning.

PUERPERAL PYREXIA.

One case of Puerperal Pyrexia was notified during the period from the West Hill Hospital.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following table gives details of the cases notified and deaths occurring during the year: —

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1—5	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....
5—10	1	1	....	1	....	....	....	....
10—15	2	2	1	....	....	....	1	....
15—20	6	7	....	1	....	....	....	....
20—25	4	4	....	1	2	1	....	....
25—35	1	7	....	2	1	2	1	....
35—45	2	4	....	....	1	1	....	....
45—55	5	1	....	....	4	1	....	....
55—65	5	....	....	....	3	....	....	....
65 and upwards	1	1	....	....	1	1	....	....
Totals	27	27	1	6	12	6	2	....

17 of the 61 cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year, and 8 cases notified previous to 1949 were removed to Sanatoria for treatment during the year.

Previous notification of the disease was not received with regard to three of the deaths occurring during the year.

Under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1924, returns have to be made quarterly to the County Medical Officer, giving a summary of the Tuberculosis Register for the District. The following is a statement of the number of cases on the Register at the beginning and end of the year: —

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Number on Register at commencement of Year	237	132	36	40	445
Number on Register at end of Year	210	131	35	45	421

All newly notified cases of Tuberculosis are investigated as a routine measure, and disinfection is carried out upon removal, transfer to hospital, or decease.

Where a patient is a member of a family having an outstanding Council house application, representations are made to the Housing Committee for a degree of priority, which varies according to the state of infection and home circumstances, to be accorded.

Any application for a Council house in which a claim is made that there is a case of Tuberculosis in the house, including applications from persons residing outside the Council's area, is referred to the Public Health Department for investigation and report.

NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

The following services were transferred to other authorities on July 4th, 1948, under the new National Health Service Act, 1946.

Hospital Services.

The whole of the Hospitals are now under the control of the South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. In addition to the West Hill Hospital, Livingstone Hospital and the Bow Arrow Infectious Diseases Hospital, the Joyce Green and Southern Hospitals are included. A specialist service is established in each hospital.

Ambulance Facilities.

The various Ambulance Services in the town were transferred to the Kent County Council and information regarding same can be obtained from the Regional Officer, 37, West Hill, Dartford.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Clinics previously held in the Market Street premises continue at the same times as before, and the various services connected with them are still available as follows:—

Ante-natal Clinic.
Infant Welfare Clinics.
Birth Control Clinic.
Diphtheria Immunisation Clinic.
Vaccination Clinic.

A Home Help service is also available in cases of illness and information can be obtained from the Supervisor at the Kent County Council Office, 37, West Hill, Dartford.

Appended hereto are the following:

- (1) Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector
- (2) Report on the Inspection of Factories, Workshops, etc., in the District.

I am,

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,

Medical Officer of Health.

Annual Report of Chief Sanitary Inspector

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my second Annual Report, which includes a summary of the work carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors during 1949.

INSPECTIONS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

(a) Complaints and Routine Visits in Connection with Nuisances.

732 Complaints were investigated during the year. This figure includes 192 complaints in connection with obstructions of drainage systems, the drains concerned being cleared by the Public Health Department's labourer. Of the remaining complaints, many were made verbally to the Sanitary Inspectors whilst carrying out their routine duties.

Preliminary Notices Served ...	527	Complied with ...	482
Statutory Notices Served ...	62	Complied with ...	71

TABLE OF NUISANCES REMEDIED AND REPAIRS EFFECTED.

Accumulations of refuse removed ...	...	...	...	...	6
Accumulations of manure removed ...	...	...	...	...	5
Animals—Nuisances abated ...	...	...	...	...	4
Brickwork (a) repaired ...	...	...	...	...	38
(b) repointed or rendered ...	...	...	...	...	41
Ceilings (a) cleansed ...	...	...	...	...	49
(b) repaired ...	...	...	...	...	132
Cesspools (a) emptied ...	...	...	...	...	12
(b) repaired ...	...	...	...	...	4
Cooking apparatus repaired or renewed ...	...	...	...	...	10
Coppers repaired or renewed ...	...	...	...	...	10
Doors—frames or fittings repaired or renewed ...	...	...	...	...	35
Drains (a) cleared by service of notice ...	...	...	...	...	4
(b) cleared by Department ...	...	...	...	...	192
(c) reconstructed ...	...	...	...	...	17
(d) repaired ...	...	...	...	...	12
(e) gully fenders repaired ...	...	...	...	...	14
(f) inspection chambers provided ...	...	...	...	...	11
(g) inspection chambers repaired ...	...	...	...	...	14
(h) vent shafts or fresh air inlets repaired ...	...	...	...	...	18
Dustbins provided ...	...	...	...	...	60
Fireplaces (a) grates provided ...	...	...	...	...	21
(b) other repairs ...	...	...	...	...	26
Floors (a) floorboards repaired ...	...	...	...	...	55
(b) floor joists repaired ...	...	...	...	...	24
(c) sub-floor ventilation improved ...	...	...	...	...	4
(d) solid floors repaired ...	...	...	...	...	7
Roofs (a) repaired ...	...	...	...	...	184
(b) stripped and re-roofed ...	...	...	...	...	2
(c) eavesgutters repaired ...	...	...	...	...	76
(d) down pipes repaired ...	...	...	...	...	47
Sinks (a) sinks renewed ...	...	...	...	...	9
(b) sink waste pipes renewed ...	...	...	...	...	19

Stairs	(a) new treads or risers	...	...	...	...	5
	(b) handrails provided	...	...	...	...	1
Walls	(a) cleansed and re-decorated	...	...	...	...	52
	(b) plaster repaired	...	...	...	...	222
	(c) dampness abated	...	...	...	...	161
Water supply	(a) taps, pipes, etc., repaired	...	...	...	...	39
	(b) water storage tanks repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	5
Windows	(a) frames, sashes or casements repaired	...	...	...	...	95
	(b) glazing	...	...	...	...	17
	(c) sashcords, etc., repaired	...	...	...	...	26
W.C.'s	(a) flushing cisterns repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	55
	(b) W.C. pans renewed	...	...	...	...	33
	(c) W.C. seats repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	10
Woodwork removed for disinfection		...	...	...	...	47
Yard paving	(a) repaired	...	...	...	...	10
	(b) re-drained	...	...	...	...	12
Miscellaneous defects not included above		...	...	...	...	21

(b) Drainage Work.

Number of drains tested by water—new buildings	...	...	...	103
Number of drains tested by water—existing buildings	...	...	...	154
Other drains tested, smoke, chemical, etc.	...	...	...	39
Total	...	...	...	296

(c) Infectious Diseases.

Visits and investigations by Sanitary Inspectors	...	...	...	369
Premises disinfected (Tuberculosis)	...	...	...	38
Premises disinfected (all other infections)	...	...	...	96
Library books disinfected	...	...	...	76

(d) Common Lodging House.

Thirty-six visits were paid to the Lodging House during the year.

An application for the renewal of the registration of the Common Lodging House was considered in November, 1948, when it was decided to refuse registration on the grounds that the premises were unsuitable for use as a Common Lodging House and were not as regards sanitation and in other respects suitably equipped for use as such.

The Lodging House was vacated and closed by June, 1949.

(e) Eradication of Vermin.

During the year disinfection was carried out at 62 houses by spraying with suitable insecticides. Where necessary the owners were requested to strip the rooms and loosen the skirting boards, etc.

The warm weather resulted in an increase in the number of complaints in connection with wasps nests and 36 nests were destroyed after treatment by Magnesium Cyanide.

Infestations by Silverfish, Carpet Beetle larvæ and Woodlice were also dealt with.

(f) Atmospheric Pollution.

Thirty-eight observations of factory chimneys have been made during the year.

Black smoke is still emitted by three factories from time to time and efforts are being made by the offending firms to find a satisfactory solution.

The district still continues under suitable climatic conditions, to be subject to heavy deposits of dust generated by the cement producing factories in the adjacent areas to the North and East, although there has been some improvement in conditions compared with 1948.

In October, 1947, a Conference of representatives of local authorities in the Thames-side area was held, and as a result of this meeting an Investigation Committee was appointed to consider what action could be taken to abate the nuisance caused by dust from the cement works.

Comprehensive investigations were carried out in the area, and estimations were made from time to time, by use of Petri dishes, of the amount of cement dust deposited in the area.

The Committee presented a detailed report of these investigations to a further Conference of representatives of local authorities in April, 1949, and the Conference instructed the Investigation Committee to secure, if possible, an interview with the Minister of Health in order that the observations of the Conference could be presented to him.

The following is an extract from the report of the Investigation Committee, relating to an interview with the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health:—

"Acting upon the instructions given by the Conference of Local Authorities at their meeting on the 28th April, 1949, the Report of the Committee, as amended by the Conference, was submitted to the Minister of Health with a request that members of the Committee should be received in order that the Report might be formally presented and the recommendations discussed with the Minister.

The Minister was unable to receive a Deputation but he arranged that they should be met by Mr. A. Blenkinsop, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health.

The Conference took place in London on Thursday, the 6th October, and the following members were present:—

Rev. Stanley J. W. Morgan, Chairman of the Committee, Mrs. E. Landen, Messrs. G. Allison-Beer, J. Duffus, T. H. Iddison, O. L. Oxley (the new Representative for Thurrock in place of Mr. P. W. Stagg).

The following Members of Parliament were also present:—

Sir Richard Acland, M.P. for Gravesend, Mr. Norman Doods, M.P. for Dartford, Mr. G. D. Wallace, M.P. for Chislehurst.

The Chief Alkali Inspector and other Officers of the Ministry of Health were present.

The Minister of Supply and the Minister of Works were also represented.

The Deputation was introduced by Mr. G. D. Wallace, Member of Parliament of the Chislehurst Division.

The Hon. Secretary, on behalf of the Committee, formally presented the Report to the Parliamentary Secretary and called attention to the recommendations made in such Report, as amended by the Conference, and asked that the recommendations should receive sympathetic consideration of the Ministry of Health.

Each member of the Committee made various observations upon the report to the Parliamentary Secretary, and in particular drew special attention to the following points:—

- (1) The effect upon the housewives living in the area.
- (2) Although no proof could be obtained by the Committee of the effect of the dust being detrimental to health, it was felt that it was a nuisance, and attention was drawn to paragraphs 56 to 60 and 61 (as amended by the Conference) of the Report of the Committee.
- (3) That consideration should be given as to whether the staff of the Ministry of Health dealing with works of this nature was adequate for the work to be performed.
- (4) A suggestion was made that greater powers should be given to Local Authorities to deal with this type of nuisance through the Sanitary Inspectors.
- (5) That copies of the Reports by the Alkali Inspectors should be furnished to the respective Local Authorities.

The three Members of Parliament each emphasized the deleterious effect of the nuisance relating to their respective constituencies.

The Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Mr. A. Blenkinsop, in reply stated he had recently visited some works in the Thames-side area, and said that apart from the question of its effect upon health, he had no doubt about the nuisance caused by cement dust.

He pointed out, as was stated in the Report of the Committee, that priorities for steel had received the support of the Ministry of Health and a large amount of plant had been delivered. As a result he was informed that there was a considerable improvement in both high and low level emission. Due to the urgent need for cement, there was no likelihood of the existing Cement Factories being removed, but it was the policy of the Government that new factories for the manufacture of cement should be erected in other parts of the country. The problem that remained, therefore, was to reduce the nuisance to a minimum.

It was hoped that the whole of the factories in the Thameside area would be provided with the necessary dust arrestment plant within a period of 2 years and the Ministry of Health were satisfied that when this was installed it would be such as to get the nuisance down to a minimum.

The Chief Inspector of Alkali, etc., Works, Mr. W. A. Damon, confirmed that in his opinion when electrostatic precipitation plant was installed in all the factories there should be 95% efficiency of dust arrestment.

It had been ascertained that the dust from the low level emission was greater than was at first thought, but appropriate steps were being taken to deal with this question.

Reference was also made by Mr. Damon to other steps which were being taken in connection with the grinding mills and bagging plants and to the general "tidying up" of the works. Improvements in these directions were having a good effect in reducing the dust nuisance.

Your Committee feel that as a result of their meeting with the Parliamentary Secretary, the question of dust nuisance in the Thames-side Area will continue to receive the very serious consideration of the Department, but they repeat the statement contained in paragraph 51 of their Report, that when every possible step has been taken to reduce the nuisance to the lowest possible minimum there will still be a nuisance at times as a slip of even 5% through the dust arrestment plant in connection with a big cement production would be equivalent to a substantial deposit per square mile per annum."

(f) Other Inspections.

Apart from the figures included in the foregoing sections of the report, the following visits were made during the year:—

Fruit Pickers Huts	...	...	...	...	...	...	28
Markets	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Public Conveniences at Inns	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
Other Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	...	313
Slipper Baths	...	...	...	...	...	...	78
Stables, Piggeries, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	57
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	88
Verminous Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	71
Re-inspections and Visits to Works in Progress	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,295
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	552

In all, a total of 9,163 visits or inspections were made during the year.

HOUSING ACTS.

Very little routine work under the Housing Acts has been carried out during the year. The normal procedure upon receipt of a complaint made in respect of sanitary defects at any house, is for an inspection to be made and a notice requiring the abatement of the major sanitary defects to be served under the appropriate provisions of the Public Health Act 1936. This procedure at present utilises completely all available supplies of material and labour.

It is with regret that attention is again drawn to the extremely slow progress which has been made in connection with the proposed Clearance Area in Heath Street. Two houses in the area were vacated during the year and the owners of the premises gave undertakings that these houses would not be re-let for human habitation. This leaves 120 of the 125 houses in the area still occupied.

Number of properties inspected	7
Notices Served 2 Notices complied with ...	0
Representations made	3
Demolition Orders made	None
Rooms or parts of house closed	None
Undertakings accepted	2
Visits in connection with overcrowding, permitted numbers, etc.	25
Visits to houses let in lodgings	27

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, Etc.

(a) Food Preparation Premises (Sec. 13).

The campaign started during 1947 in connection with securing full compliance with Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938, and the maintenance of a high standard of hygiene in food preparation premises has been continued during the year. During 1947 the emphasis was upon restaurant kitchens, in 1948 factory canteens and butchers' shops were included, and in 1949 the campaign was extended to grocers' premises. Over 90% of the grocers' shops in the area now have a constant hot water supply, and in most of the remaining 10%, which includes a number of small "one man business" shops, hot water is made available by other means.

Whilst it would not be wise to under-estimate the dangers which can arise from failure to observe a strict code of hygiene in the preparation and sale of food, it is considered that there has been a tendency to place undue emphasis on this subject during recent years. In this connection it is interesting to note that in this Borough in which approx. 2,800,000 main meals, 6,000,000 subsidiary meals are served annually at communal feeding centres including restaurants, canteens, etc., there has been no reported case of food poisoning during the last three years. This can profitably be compared with the preventable deaths, injuries, and indispositions which arise in other ways, including 400 deaths per week from Tuberculosis, which receive scant publicity.

(b) Premises Used for the Sale of Ice Cream.

Number of Dealers registered	52
Number of Manufacturers registered	13
Number of samples taken for bacteriological examination ...	53

Of the 53 samples taken, 19 were in Grade I, 15 were in Grade II, 6 in Grade III and 13 in Grade IV.

It will be noted that the proportion of samples in Grades I and II compared with those in Grades III and IV is approximately the same as during the previous year.

Once again it was noted that manufacturers who rarely achieved results better than Grade III during the warm summer weather found little difficulty in producing samples falling within Grades I or II during the winter months.

Although 13 premises are registered for the manufacture of ice cream, manufacture actually took place at only 9 during the year; at 4 manufacture is by the hot mix method.

The following summary shows the results of chemical analysis of Ice Cream samples submitted during the year:—

ICE CREAM—CHEMICAL ANALYSIS 1949

Manufacturer A.				Mix		Fat		Total Solids
12.1.49	...	...	...	Hot	...	1.8%	...	15.5%
16.2.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.9%	...	17.7%
20.4.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.2%	...	19.7%
5.7.49	...	...	...	"	...	2.7%	...	20.7%
4.8.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.2%	...	16.1%
31.8.49	...	...	...	"	...	2.4%	...	17.3%
15.11.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.0%	...	18.5%
Manufacturer B.								
16.2.49	...	...	...	Hot	...	4.1%	...	18.5%
4.8.49	...	...	...	"	...	4.7%	...	20.9%
Manufacturer C.								
16.2.49	...	...	...	Hot	...	5.2%	...	20.4%
20.5.49	...	...	...	"	...	5.3%	...	20.2%
15.11.49	...	...	...	"	...	9.6%	...	28.8%
Manufacturer D.								
16.2.49	...	...	...	Hot	...	2.8%	...	24.2%
20.4.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.0%	...	29.7%
5.7.49	...	...	...	"	...	0.45%	...	22.0%
4.8.49	...	...	...	"	...	2.7%	...	22.5%
31.8.49	...	...	...	"	...	4.0%	...	23.07%
15.11.49	...	...	...	"	...	3.3%	...	25.4%
Manufacturer E.								
20.4.49	Cold	...	1.6%	...	16.8%
20.5.49	"	...	6.3%	...	30.3%
5.7.49	"	...	5.35%	...	31.35%
31.8.49	"	...	7.0%	...	30.3%

Manufacturer F.

20.5.49	Cold	...	7.3%	...	34.4%
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Manufacturer G.

20.7.49	Cold	...	5.6%	...	29.4%
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Ice Cream from Various Manufacturers Outside the Area.

Source of Supply	Date	Fat	Total Solids
Charlton	20.5.49 ...	4.7%	26.2%
Gravesend (1)	4.8.49 ...	2.7%	34.1%
Paddington	4.8.49 ...	5.6%	27.5%
Lewisham	4.8.49 ...	8.7%	32.6%
Gravesend (2)	4.8.49 ...	8.2%	35.1%
Farnborough	4.8.49 ...	7.2%	32.9%
Bexley	31.8.49 ...	10.3%	36.8%

From this and other evidence, the Council reached the conclusion that regulations should be made fixing a minimum fat content of 5% for Ice Cream, this figure to be subject to amendment when supplies of fat become more plentiful, and representations were made to the Ministry of Food to this effect.

A fact which may be overlooked in this connection is that many manufacturers by the "hot mix" methods supplement their supply of rationed commodities by large scale purchase of imported, unrationed sweetened fat.

(c) Slaughterhouses.

There is now no licensed Slaughterhouse and one licensed Knacker's Yard in the Borough. In addition to the inspection of pigs slaughtered for home consumption by pig breeders, inspections have also been made of animals killed for consumption at a large Hospital within the Council's area and figures given for inspection of slaughterhouses and animals are inclusive.

	Cattle, excl. Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep.	Pigs.
Number killed	None	2	5	None	176
Number inspected	None	2	5	None	176
All diseases, except Tuberculosis:					
Whole carcase condemned ...	None	None	None	None	None
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	None	None	None	None	5
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	2.8%
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcase condemned ...	None	None	None	None	None
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	None	None	None	None	7
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	4%

(d) Milk.

LICENCES, ETC.—The following are details in connection with licences issued and premises in use in the area:—

Number of dairies (excluding dairy farms)	2
Number of registered distributors with premises in the Borough (including 4 distributors selling sterilized milk only) ...	7
Number of registered distributors with premises outside the Borough (including 2 selling sterilized milk only) ...	5
Tuberculin Tested Milk Dealers' Licences issued	2
Tuberculin Tested Milk Supplementary licences issued ...	12
Accredited Milk Supplementary licences issued	2
Pasteurised Milk Dealers' licences issued	8
Pasteurised Milk Supplementary licences issued	12
Sterilized Milk Dealers' licences issued	5
Sterilized Milk Supplementary licences issued	12

SAMPLES.—During the year 11 samples of Tuberculin Tested Pasteurised milk were taken, 9 samples of Pasteurised milk, 2 of Tuberculin Tested milk and 2 of raw undesignated milk. With the exception of 1 sample of Pasteurised milk, all were satisfactory.

On the 1st October, 1949, the local authorities duties in connection with the inspection of dairy farm cowsheds were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture. One result of this transfer will be that under the new regime the two cowsheds in this Council's area, which were previously inspected at monthly intervals, will not, as they are not producing designated milk, be subject to any form of inspection unless the milk which they supply wholesale for re-distribution, fails to satisfy the wholesale dairyman who takes their supply.

The inspection which will then be made will be carried out by members of the Milk Distributive Trade.

Whether this system will result in an improved standard of hygiene at the place of production is a matter of conjecture.

(e) Inspections.

The following is a table showing the number of inspections made of premises used in connection with the preparation of food:—

Cowsheds	26
Dairies	59
Food Preparation General—Cafes, etc.	943
Bakehouses	76
Fried Fish Shops	58
Ice Cream Premises	269
Knackers Yards	61
Slaughterhouses	53
Visits in connection with unsound food	95
Notices served as a result of above inspections	43
Notices complied with as a result of above inspections ...	45

(f) Food and Drug Sampling.

During the year 133 samples were obtained (58 Formal and 75 Informal). The following table shows the results of the analysis of these samples:—

Article.	Formal.	Informal.	Genuine.	Not Genuine.	Remarks.
Apple Puree ...	2	—	2	—	—
Baking Powder ...	2	—	2	—	—
Beef Suet ...	2	—	2	—	—
Butter ...	3	—	3	—	—
Cheese ...	—	1	1	—	—
Cocoa ...	1	—	1	—	—
Coffee ...	—	2	2	—	—
Cream of Tartar ...	—	1	1	—	—
Curry Powder ...	—	2	2	—	—
Custard Powder ...	—	1	1	—	—
Demerara Sugar ...	1	—	1	—	—
Fish Cakes ...	1	—	1	—	—
Fynnon Salts ...	—	1	1	—	—
Gelatine ...	—	2	2	—	—
Glace Cherries ...	1	—	1	—	—
Glycerine, Lemon and Ipecacuanha Cough Mixture ...	—	1	1	—	—
Ground Ginger ...	—	1	1	—	—
Ground Nutmegs ...	—	1	1	—	—
Horseradish Relish ...	—	1	1	—	—
Ice Cream ...	—	31	29	2	1.6% fat. Subsequent sample satisfactory. 0.45% fat. Subsequent sample satisfactory.
Lard ...	2	—	2	—	—
Lemonade ...	1	—	1	—	—
Lemonade Powder ...	—	1	1	—	—
Liquid Paraffin ...	—	1	—	1	Failed to pass B.P. test for carbonizable substances, otherwise genuine. Matter taken up with wholesalers.
Liver Sausage ...	3	—	3	—	—
Margarine ...	3	—	3	—	—
Milk ...	13	14	27	—	—
Pastry Mix ...	—	1	—	1	Imported. Taken up with wholesalers, supply withdrawn.
Peel—mixed ...	1	1	2	—	—
Plum jam ...	3	—	3	—	—
Pork Pies ...	1	—	1	—	—
*Pork Sausage ...	2	—	—	2	—
Saccharin Tablets ...	—	1	1	—	—
Sago Creamola ...	—	1	1	—	—
Salad Cream ...	1	2	3	—	—
Salad Dressing ...	—	1	1	—	—
Salmon & Anchovy Paste... Salmon and Shrimp Paste...	— 1	1 —	1 1	— —	— —
*Sausage ...	4	—	3	1	—
†Sausage Meat ...	6	—	5	1	—
Self Raising Flour ...	1	—	1	—	—
Semolina ...	—	2	2	—	—
Short Pastry ...	1	—	1	—	—
Tomato Ketchup ...	—	1	1	—	—
Verrox Spread ...	—	1	1	—	—
Vinegar ...	1	1	2	—	—
Vita Crunch ...	1	—	1	—	—
Yorkshire Pudding mixture ...	—	1	1	—	—
TOTALS ...	58	75	125	8	—

* The two samples of pork sausage and the sample of sausage were taken from the branch shop of a multiple firm. The meat deficiencies were 28%, 20% and 8%. Proceedings were instituted in respect of the first two offences. Fines of 40/- and £3 3s. 0d. costs and £3 0s. 0d. and £3 3s. 0d. costs were imposed. After the third offence, full details were submitted to the Ministry of Food for consideration and they in turn took samples at the place of manufacture. Subsequent samples were found to be satisfactory.

† Proceedings instituted, fine of 80/-, £5 5s. 0d. costs and £2 2s. 0d. Government Analyst's fee imposed.

(g) Unsound Food.

The total quantity of unsound food dealt with during the year was 1 ton, 15 cwt. 2 qrs. 2 lbs. This figure again shows a reduction.

Details of the foods surrendered are tabulated below:—

	Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs.	Lbs.
Bacon	—	—	—	19
Butter	—	—	—	1
Cheese	—	—	—	12
Cooking Fat	—	—	—	12
Margarine	—	—	—	12
Fish:				
Wet Fish	—	8	1	5
Smoked Fish	—	—	3	21
Fish Cakes	—	—	2	—
Fruit and Vegetables:				
Bananas	—	—	—	10
Oranges	—	8	—	21
Meat:				
Pork	—	—	—	11
Pork Rinds	—	—	3	—
Cooked Meat	—	—	1	1
Meat Pies	—	—	1	16
Sausage and Sausage Meat	—	—	2	—
Poultry	—	1	3	13
Miscellaneous:				
Bemax	—	—	—	18
Cocoanut Ice	—	—	—	9
Maccaroni	—	—	2	4
Ovaltine Rusks	—	—	3	4
Patent Barley	—	—	—	24
Sugar	—	—	—	3
Sweetened Fat	—	—	—	24
Tinned Goods:				
Milk 501 tins, Fish 82 tins, Meat 143 tins,				
Vegetables 194 tins, Jam 44 tins, Fruit				
85 tins, Soup 14 tins, Miscellaneous				
8 tins	—	11	—	14
TOTAL WEIGHT	1	15	2	2

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT.

During the year a further survey of part of the Borough was carried out. Two maintenance treatments of the sewers were also undertaken.

Number of complaints received and dealt with	174
Number of premises treated	164
Total estimated kill (Ministry of Agriculture formula)	2,993

SHOPS ACTS, 1934.

Number of inspections made	78
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Generally speaking, the provisions of the Shops Acts are well observed and it has not been necessary to take anything more than informal action to secure compliance where contraventions have been found.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Proceedings were instituted in three cases for offences under Section 38 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938. Details are given in the appropriate section of this Report.

I am,

Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. H. IDDISON,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

(1) INSPECTIONS.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Inspections	Number of Notices	Prosecutions
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	34	96	3	Nil.
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	105	207	21	Nil.
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-workers' Premises) ...	12	30	10	Nil.
TOTAL	151	333	34	Nil.

(2) CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars.	No. of cases in which defects were found.				Prosecutions
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of Cleanliness (S1) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature (S3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (S4) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective Drainage of Floors (S6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S7):					
(a) Insufficient	8	8	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	38	33	—	5	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	1	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	47	42	—	5	—

OUTWORK.

SECTIONS 110 and 111.

Nature of Work.	No. of Outworkers in Aug. List required by Section 110(1)(c).	No. of Cases of Default in sending Lists to Council.	No. of Prosecu- tions for Failure to Supply Lists.	No. of Instances of Work in Unwhole- some Premises.	Notices Served.	Prose- cutions.
Wearing Apparel:						
Making, etc.	None	None	None	None	None	None
Cleaning and Washing	None	None	None	None	None	None
TOTAL	None	None	None	None	None	None

FACTORIES ACT, 1917

Inspection of Factories and Workshops, 1917

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found
(1) Factories in which Section 1 of the Act is in force	14	66	3	10
(2) Factories in which Section 2 of the Act is in force	107	207	10	24
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding the premises mentioned in (1) and (2))	12	30	10	24
Total	133	293	23	58

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found	No. of cases in which defects were found
(a) Defects in buildings	1	1	1	1
(b) Defects in machinery	1	1	1	1
(c) Defects in ventilation	1	1	1	1
(d) Defects in lighting	1	1	1	1
(e) Defects in other premises	1	1	1	1
Total	5	5	5	5

TOTAL

133 cases in which defects were found

293 cases in which defects were found

23 cases in which defects were found

58 cases in which defects were found

107 cases in which defects were found

66 cases in which defects were found

3 cases in which defects were found

10 cases in which defects were found

24 cases in which defects were found

30 cases in which defects were found

24 cases in which defects were found